



Jazz: The Legacy of Dizzy Gillespie

The Billy Taylor Trio with Jon Faddis, Trumpet



Grades 7-12

Tuesday, March 1, 2005 • 11 a.m.-12 p.m. ET

When viewing *Jazz: The Legacy of Dizzy Gillespie* and participating in this guide's suggested activities, the following National Standards for Music will be addressed: 3, 6 and 9

Students Will See and Hear...

Dr. Billy Taylor, considered to be one of America's leading spokesmen for jazz, presents a program of performance and demonstration highlighting trumpet legend Dizzy Gillespie. Gillespie helped create bebop, a new musical genre, in the 1940s. Guest trumpeter Jon Faddis provides a first-hand account of performing with his mentor, John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie. Faddis is, in his own right, a jazz icon. He was inspired to play trumpet at age 8 after seeing a performance by Louis Armstrong on television. At age 15, Faddis played for Gillespie at the Monterey Jazz Festival, and would collaborate with Gillespie for years to come. Indeed, Gillespie once said of Jon Faddis, "He's the best ever, including me!"

Curriculum Connections:

Jazz: The Legacy of Dizzy Gillespie program correlates with the following curricula: Music, Social Studies/History, Language Arts

Educational Objectives

- To identify musical styles, to develop critical listening skills
- To understand American cultural history from the 1940s, as reflected in the jazz scene in New York City
- To discover how popular music trends reflect or precede changes in society
- To understand how language can support an artistic movement (bebop); to appreciate different styles of communication, from spoken word to musical performance

Program Notes

Dizzy Gillespie: The Performer and His Legacy

Born on October 21, 1917 in South Carolina, Dizzy Gillespie was to help change the course of music in the twentieth century not once but twice. First, in the early 1940s in New York City, he was one of the originators of bop (also called bebop), a jazz style that features extremely fast tempos, intricate melodies, and complicated chord progressions. Developed from older forms of danceable jazz such as swing, bop is intended primarily for listening, not dancing. In 1945, with

saxophonist Charlie Parker, Gillespie led a bop quintet that is still considered one of the greatest jazz bands of all time.

Also in 1945, Gillespie formed the first of his big bands, a large jazz band of 10 or more musicians made up of trumpets, trombones, saxophones, piano, bass, and drums. Big bands had been around for many years, but Gillespie was the first to combine jazz improvisation with Afro-Cuban rhythms found in Latin dance music. This fusion of musical elements has had a profound and lasting impact on popular music and

can be heard today in almost any jazz band playing anywhere and in rock bands such as Santana.

In addition to being a musical innovator, Dizzy Gillespie was also a cultural icon representing a fun, friendly kind of individualism. Nicknamed "Dizzy" because of his penchant for clowning around, Gillespie's trademark goatee, black horn-rimmed glasses, and beret became a kind of beatnik uniform in the 1950s. His other famous trademark, the curled bell of his horn, was the result of an accident when a friend sat on his trumpet. Gillespie

picked up the damaged instrument, played it and announced that the new shape was an improvement, because “I hear the sound quicker.” Later, he had a trumpet designed this way.

What Is Jazz?

Jazz developed in southern African American communities more than 100 years ago. When Africans came to America, they brought their musical traditions. The music, sounds, and instruments of other American peoples influenced African Americans to create new styles of music such as spirituals, work songs, and later, jazz. Jazz has changed dramatically over the past 100 years and includes a diversity of styles such as ragtime, swing, bop, cool, fusion, and free jazz.



Michael Wilderman/JazzVisionPhotos.com

Dizzy Gillespie performs in a Washington, DC jazz club

What to Look and Listen for:

Melody, harmony, and rhythm are the basic components of all forms of jazz. Melody is a tune that you can sing or hum made of different musical notes played in a particular order. Harmony is a combination of several musical notes sounded at once, either by one instrument such as a piano, or by a group of instruments or singers each sounding one or more notes. Rhythm in jazz is almost always syncopated and is based upon dance rhythms.

Syncopation is a type of rhythm in which accents are shifted from what are normally strong beats to weak beats. Most rhythms in European classical music are not syncopated. Their strongest accents fall on the beat, most often on count 1 as in **1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4**. In jazz, the accents are most often on beats 2 and 4 as in **1, 2, 3, 4**, or are sometimes between the beats.

Improvising is creating new music on the spot. When musicians improvise, they usually know the basic melodies, harmonies, and rhythms on which they will make changes. First, a group or soloist plays a song, (called the head), with a minimum of improvisation. Each player then takes a turn, or solo, creating an improvisation based upon the head. Sometimes the improvised melody seems unrecognizable, completely unrelated to the original music. Then, suddenly, the musician unexpectedly revisits elements of the basic melody.

The trumpet has been one of the primary instruments in jazz since its inception. Capable of creating soft, whispering tones, the trumpet can also dazzle with its brilliant, brassy high notes. Dizzy Gillespie was one of the first trumpeters in jazz to play extremely fast, improvised melodies filled with jarring changes of rhythm over its entire pitch range from very low to very high.

About the Artists

The Billy Taylor Trio includes Dr. Billy Taylor on piano, Chip Jackson on bass, and Winard Harper on drums.

Jon Faddis is a world-renowned trumpeter, conductor, composer, and educator and is Music Director of the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band.



The Billy Taylor Trio



Jon Faddis

Internet Resources

For more information, visit:
trumpetstuff.com
dizyalumni.com
jazzkids.com
iaje.org

Resources related to **Jazz: The Legacy of Dizzy Gillespie** can be found on page 20.

Part of *A New America: The 1940s and the Arts*, the Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation Series for Artistic Excellence. For additional resources, visit kenedy-center.org/pwtv